



PERSONAL EVANGELISM

Biblical Research Library
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CONTENTS

Introduction – 3

- 1 – *One’s Conversion To God* – 6**
- 2 – *God Is Our Creator* – 8**
- 3 – *Man’s Problem With Sin* – 10**
- 4 – *Man’s Two Greatest Problems* – 12**
- 5 – *Where God Wants All Men* – 14**
- 6 – *Jesus Is Coming* – 17**
- 7 – *Defining The Gospel Event* – 19**
- 8 – *Obedience To The Gospel* – 24**
- 9 – *Count The Cost!* – 28**



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PERSONAL EVANGELISM

Discipleship means that individuals implement the life and work of Jesus in their own lives. There is no better way to do this than to be a fisher of men. When Jesus called His first disciples, He promised that He would make them “fishers of men.” Those today who are called into discipleship will be as Jesus trained the first disciples. They will be fishers of men. The material of this Book, therefore, is written for the purpose of aiding disciples to do that which they are to be doing, seeking and saving the lost. If you seek to be a disciple of Jesus, you will make every effort to follow Jesus as those early disciples who were personally equipped by Jesus to preach and teach the gospel to the lost. Since it is our calling as disciples to populate heaven by winning souls for Jesus, then it is imperative to learn skills that will help us be better fishers of men. This is not an option to discipleship. This is discipleship. The mark of a disciple of Jesus is that he or she is doing what Jesus called us to do, that is to be a fisher of men.

INTRODUCTION

Jesus said that we must preach the gospel to the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15). In order to aid Christian workers to accomplish this work, the information and approach of sharing the gospel that is explained in this Book will aid you in fulfilling your responsibility as a disciple of Jesus.

This is a simple means by which you can lead others to understand the simplicity of the gospel, as well as give confidence to others about sharing the gospel. As a teacher, you can encourage others to learn an easy way by which to share the simple message of the gospel. You can extend your evangelistic efforts beyond yourself by teaching others how to share the gospel. Since every Christian should be able to teach the gospel to others, the material that follows will give

everyone the confidence that is needed to do the work of preaching and teaching the gospel to a lost world.

When Paul went to Corinth, as well as to all locations where he preached, the first thing he taught was the gospel. He later wrote to the Corinthians, “*For I delivered to you **first of all** that which I also received: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures***” (1 Co 15:3,4). When we approach people about their salvation, we must first share with them the gospel of Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection. If we have not shared this historical fact, then we have not preached the gospel. It is the good news of Jesus’ atoning death for our sins and bodily resurrection for our

hope that people must hear. All other discussions are less important than our discussion with the lost concerning the gospel of Jesus. Therefore, I want to encourage you through the following presentation of simple charts to preach the gospel to the world. You can be a fisher of men if you will take the time to learn and share what follows.

USING THE CHARTS

There are nine charts or diagrams in this presentation of the gospel. These charts illustrate **the basic concepts that should be emphasized when leading someone to Jesus**. You may not have enough time in one discussion session to share all the information of all nine charts. Therefore, you may want to share the thoughts of only three or four charts at any one particular time of discussion.

If you know that you will only have one opportunity to share with someone, then the concepts of **charts 6, 7 and 8** must be taught. These charts illustrate the central message one must know in order to understand and obey the gospel. These three charts emphasize the concepts of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and Romans 6:3-6. These are the three most important charts of this series and the concepts that everyone must know. All of the charts, as well as our Christian life, are centered around what is taught in these three scriptures.

A general principle to remember is that all our teaching and lives must be centered around the gospel. This is our purpose for believing and living with

Jesus as our Savior. Whenever we teach the gospel to others, it is best to refer the prospect continually back to the atonement of Jesus for our sins and His resurrection to give us hope. In this way, a prospect will respond to God as a result of what God has done for us. In other words, one **responds to the gospel** in order to do what God wants us to do to be saved. If we simply teach people what to do to be saved, they will not have the proper motivation to respond. People must respond to the grace of God that was revealed through Jesus. Their response is obedience to the good news of His death and resurrection.

The following instructions are directed toward helping you to correctly present each chart to those who have not obeyed the gospel. With each chart I will give information that can be presented as you discuss the major concepts that each chart represents. You may have other things you would like to discuss with your prospect that are not stated in this series of charts. You may want to add your own information in following studies. I would do this as a follow-up study to the presentation of the material that is presented here. It is best to keep your presentation of the gospel as simple as possible on the first study or two.

Another important point in learning how to present the gospel is to present the material of the charts as many times as possible in order to develop your own system of sharing the gospel with others. I have found that the more one presents the material that follows, the more confidence he or she has in sharing the

gospel with others. You will learn ways of stating things to prospects, as well as questions to ask in order to generate discussion.

Whatever your presentation of the gospel develops into being, here are some fundamental things to remember.

1. Remember your objective. Each chart has one or more objectives that are to be accomplished. This objective must be understood by the prospect before progressing to the next chart. Be sure to use the scriptures that are listed with the charts in order to emphasize the prime objective of each particular chart before progressing to the next chart. Though each chart has primary objectives, keep in mind that all charts are leading the prospect to the primary objective, that is, obedience to the gospel.

Also keep in mind that the objectives that are stated are written for you in your study of this course. These are not statements that you would make to a prospect.

2. Remember to use the key scriptures. Each chart has one or more key scriptures that are listed with the chart. It is best to use only these scriptures in order to emphasize the objective of each chart. Keep in mind that it is best to use as few scriptures as possible when studying with those who do not know the Bible well. The use of many scriptures will often confuse the one with whom you are studying. One passage that is adequately explained is sufficient to teach a particular point.

If you have an opportunity for a sec-

ond study with a prospect, then other scriptures can be used to reinforce material that was previously studied. It is not the multiplicity of scriptures that are presented that prove a point, but one's understanding of a particular scripture in its biblical context. It is good to know many scriptures, but it is not necessary to present all that you know to someone who knows little about the Bible.

3. Remember the spiritual journey. As you study through the charts with an individual, keep in mind that you are taking someone on an intellectual and emotional journey to Jesus. It is important to convey to prospects the information that is revealed in the Bible concerning their salvation. However, as teachers of the gospel, we must be sensitive to the emotional impact the gospel has on the heart of the sincere believer. As you present the gospel to others, therefore, be sensitive to their feelings. Remember the first time you heard the gospel and the impact it had on your life. Presenting the gospel to someone is more than sharing facts and reading scriptures. It involves our understanding of the impact the gospel has on the heart of the truly repentant believer.

Knowledge of the Scriptures without repentance will not produce obedience to the gospel. Keep in mind, therefore, that as a teacher, you must teach God's word in a way that will touch the hearts of sinners in order that they respond by obedience to the gospel.

4. Write your own charts. The charts of this presentation of the gospel are only examples of what you can do in writing

your own charts. I have found it best to approach a prospect with a pencil, a piece of paper, and a Bible. In this way you do not intimidate the prospect. It is best, therefore, that you learn to design your own diagrams as you go through the

scriptures of this presentation. When you have written your own chart before the prospect, then you can leave it in his or her hand for further thought. Use the charts of this Book as a guide to design your own charts on a piece of paper.

Chapter 1

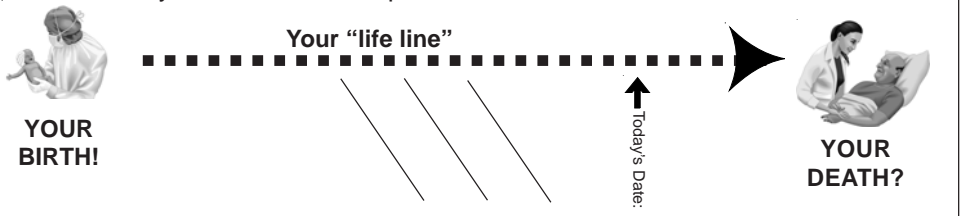
One's Conversion To God

Chart 1

Your Response To God's Love

- | | | |
|--|-------------|-----------|
| 1. Are you SAVED ? | YES | NO |
| 2. WHEN were you saved? | Date: _____ | |
| 3. Are you a MEMBER of a church? | YES | NO |
| 4. WHEN did you become a member of this church? | Date: _____ | |
| 5. Have you been BAPTIZED ? | YES | NO |
| 6. WHEN were you baptized? | Date: _____ | |
| 7. HOW were you baptized? | _____ | |

Directions: In relation to today's date, indicate on your "life line" when you were saved, baptized or became a member of a church.



The preceding chart 1 is the initial presentation of the gospel message. Here are things to keep in mind when presenting the information of this chart:

A. Objectives:

1. To show your interest in the religious experience of the one with whom you intend to share the gospel.
2. To allow your religious friend to

share his or her religious conversion in order that he or she in turn allows you the opportunity to share your conversion as it is defined by the Bible.

3. To record the religious conversion of the one with whom you are sharing in order that he or she does not revert to what you teach in order to justify his or her own erroneous conversion after you have shared the gospel.

This is a very important point. Before

you continue with your sharing of the gospel, it is best to make a written record of how the one with whom you are speaking actually came to the point of what he or she believes is a state of salvation.

B. Presentation of instructions:

1. It is very important to be interested in the religious conversion experience of the one with whom you are discussing religious matters. Your interest in his or her conversion will motivate the one with whom you are speaking to be interested in your conversion. In doing this, you are earning the right to share the gospel.

2. Write on the chart the date of your study with your friend. If the one with whom you are sharing the gospel gives you permission, you may write his or her birth date on the chart.

3. Ask if the one with whom you are sharing is saved. Draw an arrow to the life line and write the date the person says he or she was saved and the word "saved" in the line.

4. If the person with whom you are studying is a member of a church, ask and write on the chart where he or she is presently a member. Determine when he or she became a member of the church to which he or she is presently a member. Write this information on the chart on the arrow that extends to the life line. **Be sure to write everything in chronological order. After you have studied with the prospect, you will have to refer to the information on this chart in order to help the prospect see that**

there may be some confusion in their minds concerning how they were saved.

5. Ask and write on the chart if your religious friend has been baptized. Ask how he or she was baptized.

6. You might ask where the prospect was saved. Allow the person with whom you are sharing the opportunity to explain his or her "conversion experience." Be interested in the experience and write details down that you feel might be important later for comparison with what you are going to share from the Bible.

IMPORTANT!

What your friend may have shared and you have written down on the first chart may be completely different from the truth of the Bible. However, simply keep your silence until you have the opportunity to share what the Bible teaches concerning obedience to the gospel.

7. After your friend has shared his or her conversion experience, make the following statement and ask the following question if their experience is different from what the Bible teaches concerning obedience to the gospel.

**That is not the way I was saved.
May I share with you how I was saved?**

If you have been sincere about asking your friend concerning his or her conversion experience, then you will have an opened door for your friend to


allow you the opportunity to share the Bible's teaching concerning the gospel and obedience to it. If the one with whom you are discussing these matters does not allow you the opportunity to also share your conversion, then there is nothing you can do but wait for another opportunity when he or she may seek your guidance. If you ask the preceding question, at least they know that you have differ-

ent views on the matter in relation to their conversion experience. If there comes a time when they want to know your conversion experience, then be ready to share the gospel with them (See 1 Pt 3:15). Every disciple must be ready to share the gospel with others at all times. This is the responsibility of the disciple of Jesus.

Chapter 2

God Is Our Creator

Chart 2



SINCE GOD IS OUR CREATOR, ...

... does He have the authority to give laws to man?

YES NO
(READ John 12:48)

... does He have authority to hold us accountable to His laws?

YES NO
(READ 2 Corinthians 5:10)

A. Objectives:

1. To emphasize that there is a God to whom obedience must be rendered because He is the Creator of man and all things. If one does not believe in God, or questions whether God exists,

then you must stop here in presenting these charts. This is the time to begin a study in Christian evidences in order to show that it is more reasonable to believe that God exists. If you are studying with one who does not have a biblical background, and he or she claims to

believe in God, it would be good to ask questions concerning what they believe about God. Those who have a lack of Bible knowledge may believe in God, but their concept of God is often contrary to the God of the Bible.

2. *To emphasize the authority of God's word and the fact that it will be the only standard by which all men will be judged in a final judgment that is to come.* If this point cannot be agreed upon at the beginning of any study of the Bible, then it is useless to continue the study. If you continue, there will be endless arguments over what the Bible claims to be truth and what one personally believes to be truth according to his or her personal experiences. In presenting the gospel, it is absolutely essential that you and the one with whom you are studying agree on the fact that the Bible will be our only authority in religious discussion concerning what one must do to please God. If a prospect is from a very traditional religion, it is very important to establish the fact that the Bible must be obeyed regardless of one's religious traditions. (A good context to discuss in reference to religious traditions is Mark 7:1-9.) If the prospect does not believe that the Bible is our only authority to establish what we must do to serve God, then a thorough explanation of Mark 7:1-9 is in order. Every religious person must understand that traditions will not save us.

B. Presentation of instructions:

1. Read together with your friend

Genesis 1:1,26,27. It is best that the prospect read the text in his or her own Bible.

2. After reading Genesis 1:1,26,27, ask this question, "**Since God is our Creator, does this give Him the right or authority to give laws to man?**" Remember, you must have a definite "YES" answer to this question. If you do not, then you must stop your study and deal with the authority of God as our creator to give law and demand obedience from all men.

3. You may read **John 12:48.** This passage directs the prospect specifically to the word of Jesus as the authority for those who live in this dispensation of time. John 12:48 teaches that we will be judged by the word of Jesus, not the traditions of men. In explaining this passage, reassure the prospect that when we stand before God in judgment, we need not have any fear concerning obedience to human religious traditions. We will not be judged by religious traditions, and thus, we must not make religious traditions an obstacle to our obedience to the will of God. Since we all have our religious traditions, this point must be made very clear.

4. Ask, "**Since God is our Creator, does He have the authority to judge us by His law?**" Be sure to circle the answer "YES" on the chart if your friend agrees with this truth. Your purpose for asking this question is to establish again the Bible as our only authority in discussing those things that are necessary for obedience to God and our salvation. If the prospect answers "NO", then you

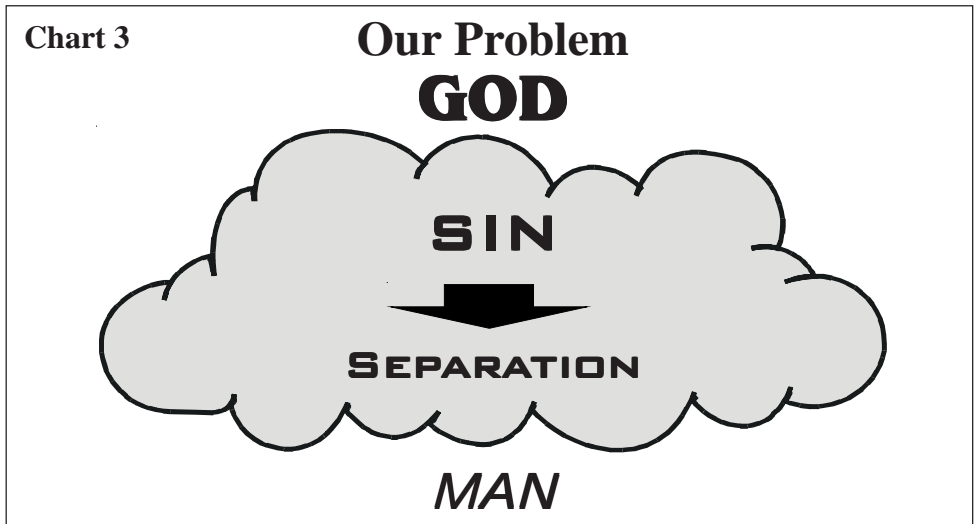
must stop here and deal with the reasons why he or she answered “NO”.

5. **Acts 17:30,31** specifically states that God will through Jesus judge those of this dispensation (Compare also Jn 5:22; At 10:42). It is important to emphasize the point that Jesus will be the final judge of all men (2 Co 5:10). Therefore, it is important to understand the word of Jesus, and our accountability to

keep His word, since we will be judged by it. By establishing the truth that we will stand before Jesus in judgment, you will establish the necessity of the prospect to listen to what Jesus says, as opposed to his or her religious traditions. We must never underestimate the hold that religious traditions have on the hearts of people.

Chapter 3

Man's Problem With Sin



A. Objectives:

1. *To emphasize man's separation (alienation) from God because of rebellion against God's will.* The one with whom you are sharing the gospel must understand that in a state of separation from God there is no eternal life. Eternal life is **only** in the presence of God because God only is eternal. If one is

not in the presence of God after death, then he or she does not have eternal life.

2. *To emphasize the fact that every man has sinned, and thus is separated from God and in need of reconciliation (to be brought back) to God.* Be sure to explain the concept that reconciliation is a restoration of ourselves to the presence of God. God is not reconciled to us. We are reconciled to Him. Since sin sepa-

rates us from God, then we must be reconciled to Him. What you are seeking to do when discussing the concept of reconciliation is to establish the foundation upon which the appeal of the gospel is emphasized in the following charts. The more you emphasize the curse of sin in our lives, and subsequent separation from God, the greater the appeal of the gospel as a means by which one can once again be reconciled to God. Therefore, when studying through the concepts of sin, separation and death, be sure that your prospect understands that in a state of separation from God there is absolutely no hope for salvation. In this state one cannot save himself by keeping religious traditions or by doing meritorious good works. If one has no solution for his sin, he is lost.

B. Presentation of instructions:

1. Read **Romans 3:9,10,23**, and ask, **“Have all people sinned against God?”** The answer must be, “Yes.” If the prospect answers, “No”, then he or she may not understand the concept of sin. Or, he or she may not understand that sin is in the life of every individual. Keep in mind that when you are going through concepts concerning sin, you must emphasize the fact that one is totally unable to make personal atonement for sin. In other words, one cannot do good works in order to “cause” sin to be forgiven. Sin is a violation of God’s law, not man’s law. We cannot rectify our sin against God’s law as we would against man’s laws. In order to find atonement

for sin against God’s law, one must seek God’s grace. When discussing the curse of sin in our lives, therefore, we are emphasizing the grace of God as it was revealed on the cross through Jesus.

2. Read **Isaiah 59:1,2**, and ask, **“What is the key word in this passage that stresses the result of sin in one’s relationship with God?”** The answer is, “Separation.” When we are separated from God, we are separated from the presence of God and eternal life. We thus need to be reconciled to God in order to have eternal life.

3. State, **“When we think about sin, therefore, we must think about separation from God. Sin and separation must always be thought of together.”**

4. If your friend needs a better understanding of the concept of sin, read and explain **1 John 3:4** and **James 4:17**.

a. Read **1 John 3:4**. **God gives both positive laws and negative laws.** In order to explain the nature of sin in reference to God’s law, it is necessary to explain how one sins.

(1) **Positive laws:** These are things that **God says we must do**. For example: *“Take care of the orphans and widows”* (Jas 1:27). If one does not do this, then he or she sins against God. This is the sin of omission. In other words, we commit a sin by omitting to do that which God specifically says we must do. We omit doing His commandments in our lives.

(2) **Negative laws:** These are things that **God says we must not do**. For example: *“Avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and contentions,*

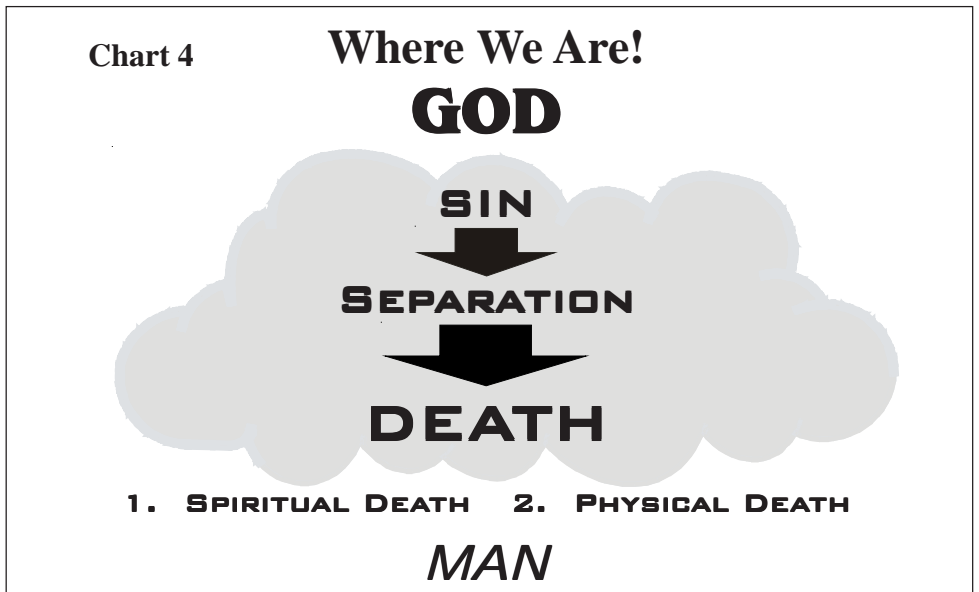
and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless” (Ti 3:9). If one does that which God says we must not do, then he or she sins against God. This is a sin of commission. We do that which God says we should not do.

b. Read James 4:17: God gives biblical principles of good. If one does not do a biblical principle of good, then he or she sins against God. A biblical principle of good is a good that is stated in principle in the Bible, but not specified in detail. For example, we must take care of orphans and widows (Js 1:27). However, the specifics of how we are to do such are not stated in James 1:27, or

any other scripture. The principle of what we must do is stated in the passage. However, we must work out the specifics of exactly how we are going to accomplish the principle (Compare Gl 6:10). The important thing to remember is that if we do not work out a way to accomplish a biblical principle of good, and do such, then we sin against God. If one thinks his or her life is without sin, then they either do not understand sin or are not being honest with themselves. However, most people will confess that they have not always done the good that they know they should have done. All have sinned, therefore, because we all have failed to do good.

Chapter 4

Man's Two Greatest Problems



A. Objectives:

1. To emphasize the two great problems of man which are spiritual death and physical death. Every man must recognize these two great spiritual problems. Without finding a solution for these problems, there is no eternal life. It is imperative, therefore, that the teacher of the gospel emphasize these two great problems when confronting those who have not obeyed the gospel.

2. To move our religious friends to seek for the good news that God has revealed for the above problems that face men. Keep in mind that the more the prospect understands that there is no hope for salvation when separated from God, the more he or she will desire to draw close to God. The good news of the gospel is what draws people to God and provides a solution for the problems of both spiritual and physical death.

B. Presentation of instructions:

1. Read Romans 6:23 and ask the prospect to explain the verse. The interpretation of the verse should be that the salary (wages) or result of sin is spiritual death. When we think of sin, we must always think of death, specifically, spiritual death that results from being separated from God. Romans 6:23 is stating that everyone has sinned, therefore, everyone who has not obeyed the gospel is separated from God and thus in a state of spiritual death. This point must be thoroughly emphasized when talking to those who have not obeyed the gospel.

Keep in mind that the religious world in general is familiar with Romans 6:23. However, many may not understand why spiritual death is the wages of sin. Explain that sin causes separation from God. It is the separation from God that results in death. Sin is the cause of the separation. Separation from God is what causes spiritual death.

2. In Romans 5:12 Paul stated, *“Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death passed to all men because all have sinned.”* This commonly misunderstood verse must be clearly explained. The first half of the verse refers to **Adam's personal sin against God**. It speaks of his personal spiritual death, or separation from God that resulted from his own sin of eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden (See Gn 2:16,17; 3:1-24). The second part of Romans 5:12 emphasizes **the problem of spiritual death that each person suffers as a result of his or her personal sin against God**. All of people are personally separated from God, and thus spiritually dead because of their own sins. Since all people sin, then all have suffered individual spiritual separation from God (See Rm 3:9,10,23).

3. Read Genesis 3:22-24. As a result of Adam's sin of eating the forbidden fruit, he was separated from the tree of life, and thus, neither he nor all humanity after him could eat of the tree of life and live forever (Compare Hb 9:27). We suffer the **consequences** of Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit because none of us can now eat of the tree of life be-

cause Adam and all humanity, were driven from Eden.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-22.

The context of 1 Corinthians 15 is discussing the **physical** resurrection. Verse 20 discusses Jesus' physical resurrection from the dead. Jesus' resurrection was the "firstfruits" of all who have physically died. The word "firstfruits" is a metaphor taken from the Old Testament where the first cuttings of the harvest were offered to God. **They were an indication or promise of the greater harvest to come.** Jesus' physical resurrection from the tomb was a signal of the greater resurrection that is yet in the future. His resurrection was different from the resurrection of Lazarus and others who were raised before Him. His resurrection was different in two ways: (1) Jesus was resurrected never to die again. (2) Jesus was resurrected with an immortal, incorruptible body as we will have when He comes again (Compare Ph 3:21; 2 Co 5:1-8; 1 Jn 3:2).

Ask the prospect, "**Who is the 'man' of verse 20?**" The answer is, "Adam." Because Adam sinned, physical death was introduced into the world when he was separated from the tree of life. As the father of humanity, Adam separated

all of us from the tree of life. However, by the man Jesus Christ came the physical resurrection from the dead (Compare Jn 5:28,29; 11:25; 1 Th 4:13-18). All who come to Jesus have access to the tree of life.

All must physically die because Adam was separated from the tree of life (See Gn 3:22-24). However, those who establish an "in Christ" relationship (covenant) with Jesus, will be bodily resurrected to life when He comes again. Though all physically die as a result of Adam's separation from the tree of life, when Jesus comes again those who are in Christ will be made alive (See 1 Co 15:22). Therefore, one must be "in Christ" in order to be resurrected to life. Those who are outside Christ will be resurrected to an eternal destruction (Compare Rv 20:12-17; 21:8).

The more you emphasize the hopeless situation of the one in sin, the greater the appeal there will be for one to obey the gospel. It is important, therefore, to dwell on these points in order to make sure the prospect understands the curse of being in the bondage of sin. He or she must understand that there is absolutely no hope of salvation in being separated from God.

Chapter 5

Where God Wants All Men

A. Objectives:

1. To emphasize Jesus' spiritual control over those who have submitted

to His will, and thus take advantage of His atonement for our sin on the cross.

We must emphasize the fact that Jesus can help those who desire to be

Chart 5

Where God Wants You To Be!

**“OUTSIDE CHRIST”**

If all spiritual blessings are “in Christ”, are there any
spiritual blessings “outside Christ”?

YES NO

helped. If there is no desire to voluntarily submit to the will of Jesus, then there can be no blessings of Jesus given that produce salvation in the lives of the obedient.

2. To emphasize the spiritual blessings that come to those who submit to the headship of Jesus.

Spiritual blessings refer to salvational benefits one receives as a result of coming into a covenant relationship with Jesus. One comes to Jesus in order to receive spiritual blessings, not physical blessings.

B. Presentation instructions:

1. It is important to understand the

metaphor “head” as it is used in reference to Jesus’ relationship with His body, the church. The word “head” refers to **control** and **center of reference**. When one submits to Jesus, Jesus controls his or her life through one’s voluntary submission to His word. Jesus controls the church through the authority of His word that directs all members to Him alone as the sole head of the church (Compare Jn 12:48; Cl 1:12-18; Hb 1:2-3; 4:12).

As the head of the individual disciple, Jesus becomes the center of reference to all actions of life. One asks, “What would Jesus do?” When one asks this question, he or she is allowing Jesus to be the head, and thus the center of reference to all decisions.

It must be clearly understood that Jesus can be the head of the individual only when one voluntarily submits to Jesus. If Jesus controls the individual in a subjective manner through a supposed direct control of the Holy Spirit, then Jesus cannot be the head of the individual. The headship of Jesus in the life of the individual Christian depends on the voluntary submission of the individual to the word of God. Jesus brings people into freedom, not a subjective bondage of His control through the violation of the free-moral choice of the individual.

2. The metaphor “**in Christ**” means that one is in a relationship with Jesus. When one is literally in a building, he or she has protection and security. Being in a building means being in a relationship with what the building has to offer as long as we remain inside. When one is “in Christ”, he or she is in a relationship with Jesus where there is protection from Satan. In Christ there is the cleansing blood of Jesus for sins that we commit (Compare 1 Jn 1:7).

Being “in Christ” means that one is in a covenant relationship with God. In this covenant relationship, one will reap the rewards of the covenant if he or she keeps the conditions of the covenant.

When one agrees to submit to Jesus’ headship and direction through His word, he or she receives all spiritual blessings that result from this submission. Have the prospect read the following key passages in order to emphasize the necessity of being “in Christ”:

a. Read **Ephesians 1:3**. “**All spiritual blessings**” have reference to those salvational blessings that were made possible by the cross of Christ and are made applicable to one’s life by obedience to the gospel. The following are some of these blessings which you must explain (Compare 2 Pt 1:2-4).

b. Read **Ephesians 1:7**. See also Colossians 1:13,14. **Redemption** means that Jesus paid a price for our sin in order to bring us back into a reconciled relationship with God. This price bought us out of the captivity of sin where we could not save ourselves (See Rm 3:24,25). Forgiveness means that God will forget all sin committed against Him (See also Rm 11:27; Hb 8:12; 1 Jn 1:7-9).

c. Read **1 Corinthians 1:2**. **Sanctification** means to cleanse or purify. When one is in a covenant relationship with Jesus, he or she is continually cleansed of sin by the blood of Jesus (See also 1 Jn 1:7; 1 Co 6:9-11).

d. Read **Romans 8:1**. When one is in Christ, he or she is **not under a sentence of condemnation** because of sin. When one has established a covenant relationship with Jesus, he or she is safe from condemnation (See also Mk 16:16; 1 Jn 5:13-20).

e. Read **2 Corinthians 5:17**. When one is in Christ, he or she is a **new creation**, or new creature. He or she is new because the obedient believer is in a spiritual relationship with God through the cleansing blood of Jesus (See also Ep 4:17-24).

f. Read **1 John 5:11**. When one

is in Christ, he or she has **eternal life** which is conditioned upon remaining faithful to Jesus (See also Jn 10:27,28).

g. Read 2 Timothy 2:10. Salvation means that one has the spiritual blessings of redemption, forgiveness and sanctification. Having such means that one is not under condemnation, but is a new creature who has eternal life. This is what God wants every person to have (See Jn 3:16; 1 Pt 3:9). This is why Jesus came into this world to offer a sacrifice for sins and to give us hope.

We must emphasize the fact that people must have an “in Christ” relationship with the Son of God. The following chart of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 explains why this is so important. This chart will explain what God did in order

to make it possible for us to come into a covenant relationship with Him. Chart 8 will explain how to come into this relationship with Christ through obedience to the gospel.

In the preceding charts you have established basic principles that emphasize your conclusion to the study of concepts that are brought out in the next three charts. If you have laid a good foundation, then the following three charts will have a great impact on the mind and heart of the one with whom you are studying. Keep in mind that it is the gospel that sells one on the grace of God. It is not in our power of persuasion, but in the power of the gospel. Therefore, simply state what the following three charts illustrate in reference to 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and Romans 6:3-6.

Chapter 6

Jesus Is Coming

A. Objective:

1. To emphasize the necessity of obeying the gospel in order to come into Christ where there is salvation from the coming judgment of destruction when Jesus comes again. It is very important at this point to explain the text of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. The better one understands this text, the more impact the conclusion of this study will have. If a prospect understands the nature of what Paul is explaining in this statement, then there will be no question in the following

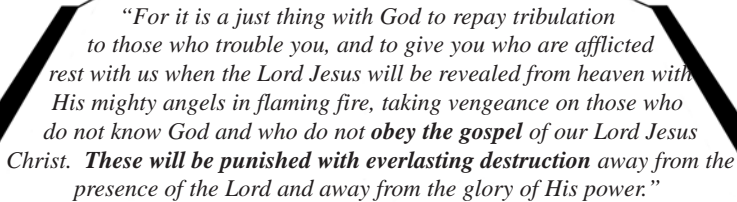
charts that one must obey the gospel in order to be saved. And this is the most important thing one must do in his life, that is, obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.

B. Presentation instructions:

1. It is very important that you read together with the one you are teaching the text of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. The following are some questions to ask concerning what Paul is stating in this important passage:

a. Ask, “What future event is

Chart 6

YOUR RESPONSE TO GOD**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**


*“For it is a just thing with God to repay tribulation to those who trouble you, and to give you who are afflicted rest with us when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who do not know God and who do not **obey the gospel** of our Lord Jesus Christ. **These will be punished with everlasting destruction** away from the presence of the Lord and away from the glory of His power.”*

Must one “obey the Gospel” in order to escape the judgment of condemnation when Jesus comes again?

1. WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?**2. HOW CAN ONE OBEY THE GOSPEL?**

verse 7 discussing?” The answer is, “The final coming of Jesus.”

b. Ask, “How is Jesus coming?” The answer is, “In flaming fire.”

c. Ask, “Who will be judged with vengeance when Jesus comes again?” The answer is, “Those who know not God and those who do not obey the gospel.”

d. Ask, “What will happen to those who do not obey the gospel?” The answer is, “They will suffer eternal destruction from the presence of God.”

It is important that there is complete agreement between you and your prospect in reference to the above teaching of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. Agreement is important because you are establishing the foundation upon which you will be drawing a conclusion in the following

two charts.

2. Also Ask, “Does this passage teach that one must obey the gospel in order to escape the coming judgment of condemnation?” To this question your friend must respond, “Yes.” If the answer is not in the affirmative, then reread the passage, for he or she did not understand what Paul said. It is very important to understand that Paul is saying it is absolutely necessary for one to obey the gospel in order to be saved. When your friend answers “Yes” to this understanding of the passage, then he or she has committed himself or herself to a conclusion that you will establish in the following charts.

3. After your prospect has answered “Yes”, then establish the fact that if one must obey the gospel in order to escape

the coming punishment, then two questions must be asked and answered:

1. What is the gospel?
2. How can one obey the gospel?

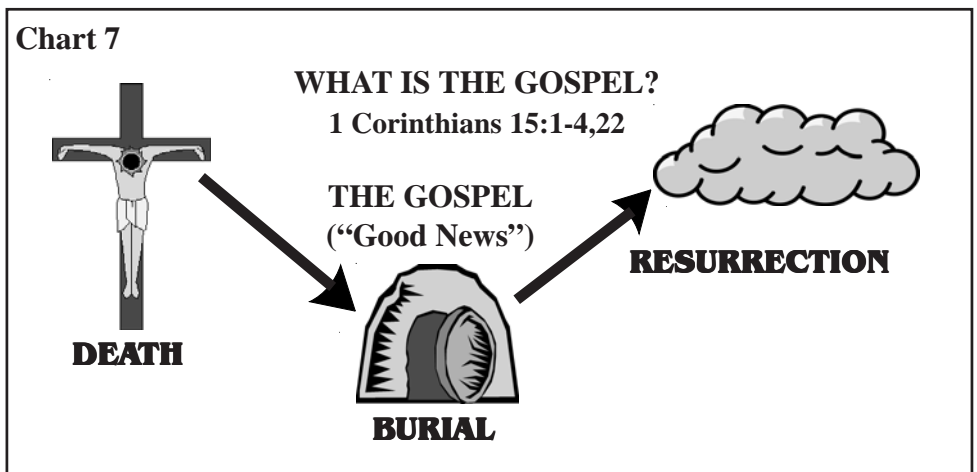
1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (chart 7) and **Romans 6:3-6** (chart 8) answer these two questions. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 answers the first question concerning what the gospel is and Romans 6:3-6 answers the second question concerning how one must obey the gospel. Several passages could be used to answer these two questions. Many scriptures could also be used. However, one must not confuse or bombard with many scriptures those who do not know the Bible well. If a great number of scriptures are used, the

one with whom we are studying will be intimidated by our knowledge of the Bible. The gospel must be presented in simplicity simply because the message of the gospel is simple. We must not give the impression that the gospel is a complex system of concepts and scriptures. Therefore, the more simple one's presentation of the gospel the easier it is for people to understand the simple message.

The above two questions must be asked and answered according to what the Bible says. The correct answer to these two questions will determine if one has correctly obeyed the gospel in order to escape the coming judgment of destruction that is explained in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. Be sure to make this point very clear.

Chapter 7

Defining The Gospel Event

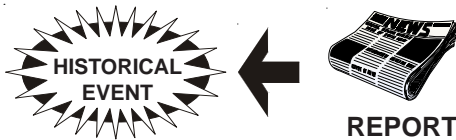


A. Objective:

1. *To understand the gospel as a historical event when Jesus answered the two greatest problems of man.* At this point in our study, you are seeking to clarify a very simple fact that is confused by most religious people. This simple fact is that the gospel is a **historical event**. Once this is established, the conclusion to what one must do in order to obey the historical event of the gospel is easy to understand.

B. Presentation of instructions:

1. Before reading **1 Corinthians 15:1-4**, use a newspaper to illustrate the difference between a **report** (the newspaper) and an **event**, a historical happening about which reports are made in the newspaper.



The event happens **before** the report (the newspaper) is written. The newspaper is a report of the historical happening of the event that took place at a specific time in history. There is a difference between the event and the report of the event.

2. Ask, “**What is the gospel?**” Typical answers are, “The Bible,” “The teachings of Jesus,” or “The New Testament.” These are wrong answers, and thus illustrate that most people do not have a correct understanding concerning the

difference between the event of the gospel and the report of the gospel. These answers cannot be right because if the gospel is, for example, the teachings of Jesus, then one can never fully obey the gospel. He can make an effort to obey the teachings of Jesus. However, he will always know that he cannot obey all the teachings of Jesus. Add to this the fact that one cannot **perfectly** obey the teachings of Jesus. It is for this reason that if the gospel were the teachings of Jesus, then one would never know for sure if he has obeyed the gospel.

3. Many people will respond that the gospel is the “good news”. But this is the meaning of the Greek word that is translated “gospel”. Therefore, if one responds that the gospel is the good news, then ask, “The gospel is good news about what?” You must make it very clear that the gospel is good news about our two greatest problems that were earlier discussed. The gospel is good news about our **sin problem** and **physical death problem**. The New Testament is a report of the gospel event that took place before the New Testament was written. Therefore, we read the New Testament in order to understand more about the historical event of the gospel. Paul explains this in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. This passage answers the question that was previously asked from the reading of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, “What is the gospel?”

4. Paul wrote, “*Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also*

you are saved, if you hold fast to that word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.” (1 Co 15:1,2).

a. In verses 1 & 2 of 1 Corinthians 15 Paul talks **about** the gospel. Therefore, the inspired words that he is using to talk about the gospel are not the gospel itself. In other words, the words of 1 Corinthians 15:1,2 are not the gospel. These are words the Spirit is directing him to use to explain the gospel. Paul is reporting the effect the gospel had on the lives of the Corinthians to whom he preached it.

(1) The gospel was **declared** (announced) to the Corinthians. The gospel is declared with words, and thus, the words are not the gospel.

(2) The gospel was **preached** to the Corinthians. The gospel event is preached by use of words. Therefore, the gospel is not the words, whether written or spoken. Words are the medium through which the gospel event is communicated to people.

(3) The gospel was **received** by the Corinthians. When one receives something, he or she accepts what is received as true. The Corinthians believed the gospel event because they received what Paul said.

(4) One **stands** in the gospel. In other words, one bases his or her emotional and spiritual self on the foundation that the gospel event was an actual historical event. This is a very important point. When we are sharing the gospel with others, there is more involved

than a simple belief in the words that communicate the event of the gospel to us. One must accept the fact of the gospel to the point that it becomes an emotional foundation upon which feelings are based and controlled. Receiving (believing) the gospel must have a spiritual and an emotional impact on the heart of man. The gospel deals not only with the head, but also with the heart.

(5) One is **saved** by the gospel. The Corinthians were saved by the gospel event, though they were not in Jerusalem when it occurred. The event of the gospel happened many kilometers away and several years before the preaching of Paul in the city of Corinth.

(6) One is saved by the gospel **IF he or she continues to believe the word by which the gospel is communicated.** The Corinthians had to continue to believe Paul’s words by which he communicated the gospel to them. Therefore, salvation by the gospel is based on the condition that one continues to believe the word by which the gospel event is communicated to us. In other words, we today must believe the New Testament that communicates to us the event of the gospel (Compare Rm 10:17). If we start doubting the report, we will fall from our salvation. It is necessary, therefore, that we continue to believe the word of God.

5. In verses 3 & 4 of 1 Corinthians 15, Paul continued, *“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, and that **He was buried**, and that **He rose again** the third day ac-*

ording to the Scriptures.”

a. The gospel was the first thing Paul preached when he went to Corinth. It is interesting to note this point because it determines what is initially important when we are approaching unbelievers. The good news of Jesus' death for our sins and resurrection for our hope is the most important subject that unbelievers must hear. Even to denominationalists this point is important. It is important because so many have confused the language and concepts concerning the gospel and how one must obey it in order to be saved.

b. The gospel is the event of **Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for our sin problem**. When studying with someone, you have already emphasized the fact that our number one problem in our relationship with God is sin. Sin has separated us from God, and thus it is necessary to take care of our sin problem before there can be a covenant relationship with God.

c. The gospel is the **burial of Jesus in a tomb in order that He be victoriously raised from the dead**. The burial of Jesus is incidental. There could be no resurrection if there were no death and burial. It is for this reason that the empty tomb has become a historical symbol of the victory of Jesus over death. It has also become an apologetic of our faith. If there were no empty tomb, then the foundation of our faith would be destroyed. Our physical resurrection because of Jesus' physical resurrection is the theme of the entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 15. The gospel is valid because of the empty tomb. The death on the

cross has effect because Jesus is not like other religious leaders who have founded religions on their own teachings. The teachings of Jesus are beneficial for living. However, if Jesus had not been raised from the dead, His teachings would always be in competition with other teachings of other men who are still in their tombs. Christianity is founded on an empty tomb, not simply the teachings of Jesus. Jesus was more than a good teacher of Israel. He was proven to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead (Rm 1:4).

d. The gospel is the event of **Jesus' physical resurrection to give us hope of overcoming our physical death problem**. This is an important point of the gospel that we often fail to emphasize. For example, we focus on the cross when we partake of the Lord's Supper. However, in our meditation on the subject of the death of Jesus on the cross, we fail to continue our thinking to the empty tomb. The cross is only half of the gospel. The resurrection is the other half, and thus should be equally emphasized when we discuss the subject of the gospel.

e. Jesus was raised to sit at the right hand of God in order to reign over all things (Ep 1:20-23; 1 Tm 2:5; Hb 8:1). When Jesus gave the great commission to the apostles, it is interesting to note that He introduced the subject of preaching the gospel to the world with an announcement of His authority over all things. He said in Matthew 28:18, *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”* When presenting the gos-

pel to someone, it is important to emphasize this fact. Jesus is not only a savior in that He took care of our sin problem, He is a King who gives hope by maintaining control over all things (Hb 1:3; 1 Pt 3:22). His authority over all things assumes that we must submit to His kingship. When presenting the gospel, we emphasize the authority of Jesus in order to establish the necessity that one submit to the reign of Jesus over all things. One is not recognizing the kingship of Jesus if he is not willing to submit to obedience to the gospel. When one is baptized, therefore, he or she is submitting to the authority of Jesus to command such in the lives of His subjects. It is for this reason that Luke mentions several times in Acts that people were baptized “in the name of Jesus.”

6. At this point in your study, it is necessary to review the thoughts of 1 Corinthians 15:20-22. These are important passages to read in order to emphasize the effect of Jesus’ resurrection. Verse 22 is specifically important. *“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive.”*

a. The context of 1 Corinthians 15 is the **physical resurrection**. 1 Corinthians 15 is not the context for discussing the spiritual separation from God because of sin. The context is dealing with **physical death and physical resurrection**. All physically die because of an indirect result of Adam’s sin. As a result of his sin he was driven from the Garden of Eden. He was driven from the garden

lest he eat of the tree of life and live forever. **Genesis 3:22-24** is the passage to read at this time. Emphasize again that verse 22 states that God drove Adam out of the garden *“... lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”* We physically die, therefore, because our forefather, Adam, was driven from the tree of life. It is important to emphasize this point because the only way we can be restored (reconciled) to the source of life—God—is obedience to the gospel. Those who do not obey the gospel will suffer the punishment of destruction from the presence of God. Obedience to the gospel is the answer to our second greatest problem, physical death.

b. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, all those who are “in Christ” will be raised to live again. It is interesting to note that there are no promises made in the New Testament that the unbelieving will be raised to eternal life. Even John 5:24,25 emphasizes the fact that the dead who “hear” the voice of the Son of God—the unrighteous do not hear—will be raised to everlasting life. The unrighteous face eternal destruction, but the righteous will come out of their graves for the purpose of eternal dwelling. It is for this reason that one must be “in Christ” in order to have hope of eternal life. Only those who are “in Christ” are promised to be raised from the dead to enjoy everlasting life in the presence of God. There is no promise of resurrection for eternal life made in the New Testament for those who are outside Christ. One must have a covenant relationship

with God in order to enjoy the rewards of this covenant.

7. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 answers the first question that 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 poses, that is, “What is the gospel?” This is the time in your study to go back and review chart 6 in order to emphasize the fact that this question has been answered. The gospel is good news about our physical death problem. Jesus was raised from the dead, and thus He has given hope to all of those who are in a covenant relationship with Him. Their hope is that they also will be raised from the dead when He comes again. The righteous look forward to the coming of Jesus because they will receive eternal life. The unrighteous do not look forward to His coming because they will be raised for eternal destruction.

8. In your study with your friend, this is the time to ask, “**How can one obey the historical event of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus?**” The answer to this question is found in Romans 6:3-6. Romans 6:3-6 is Paul’s answer to the second question that 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 poses, that is, “How can one obey the gospel?”

At this point in your study, your

friend must fully understand that the gospel is the historical event of the death of Jesus for our sins, His burial, and His resurrection to give us hope of resurrection after physical death. Your friend should be seeking an answer for his or her sin problem. He or she should also be seeking hope in view of physical death. The gospel answers these two greatest problems of mankind. It is for this reason that the gospel is good news. It is good news about our spiritual death problem. It is good news about our physical death problem.

If you have laid the correct intellectual and emotional foundation with the person with whom you are studying, the next verses and chart should bring a response. The one with whom you are studying will not be able to deny the answer that Romans 6:3-6 gives as an explanation as to how one must obey the gospel. It would be good at this point, therefore, to review briefly main concepts concerning the gospel. Simply state that the gospel is a historical event, and thus we must somehow obey this event. We can obey an event by another event that must take place in our lives. That event will be an obedient response to what Jesus did on the cross and in the tomb.

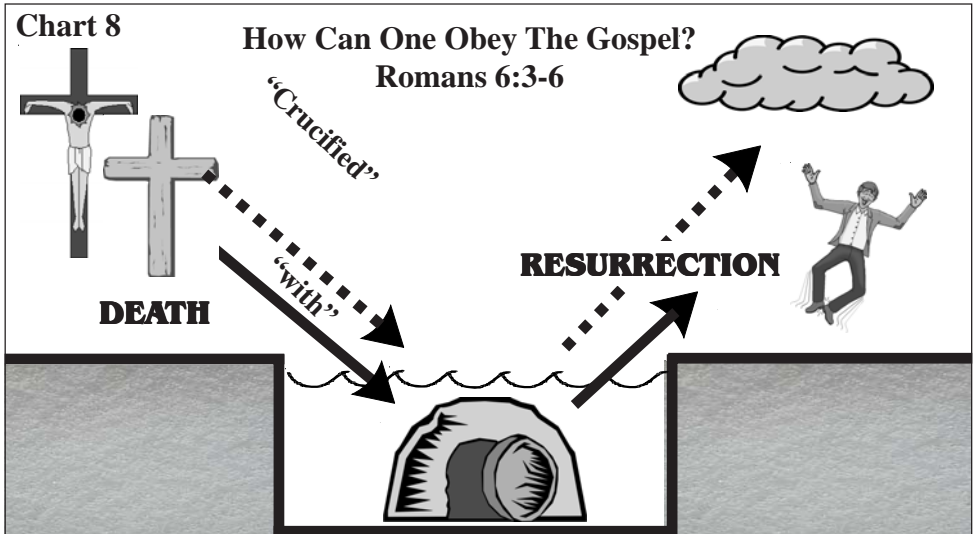
Chapter 8

Obedience To The Gospel

A. Objectives:

1. To teach that baptism (immersion) is the manner by which we obey the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

At this time in your sharing the gospel, a connection is made between the gospel event that took place in Jerusalem about two thousand years ago and the individual with whom you are studying.



2. To teach that one cannot be saved from the coming judgment of destruction of the wicked if he or she does not obey the gospel by immersion in water for the remission of sins.

B. Presentation instructions:

1. It is very important to read and explain the text of Romans 6:3-6. Here are some things to point out in this passage that will help one better understand the context of Romans 6.

a. Verses 1-3 is a series of questions. Point out that there is a question mark behind each verse. Paul is asking three questions that he will answer in the context of chapter 6.

b. Verse 3 is the third question that is first answered by verse 4, and again, by verse 5. The questions of verses 1 & 2 are answered in the context of the chapter.

Paul asked, “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized [immersed] into Christ Jesus were baptized [immersed] into His death?” In Paul’s answer to the question of verse 3, he first answers the question of verse 3 in verse 4. Because of the importance of the answer, he answers the question again in verse 5, but with different words and phrases. Therefore, keep in mind that verses 4 & 5 are the same answer to the question that is presented in verse 3.

c. After reading the question of verse 3, ask the prospect the question, “**How is one baptized into the death of Jesus that took place about two thousand years ago and several thousand kilometers away?**” After asking this question, simply explain that Paul will answer the question in verse 4, and again in verse 5.

2. In verse 4 Paul answered, “Therefore, we are buried with Him through

baptism [immersion] into death, that just as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, even so we also might walk in newness of life.”

a. One is buried with Jesus in baptism. The preposition “with” emphasizes a union with Jesus in one’s obedience to His death and burial. It is very important to emphasize this point. Everyone wants to be with Jesus in eternity. In fact, Paul wrote the desires of all of us when he stated, “*We are confident, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and be present **with** the Lord*” (2 Co 5:8). In order for one to be **with** Jesus in eternity, he or she must be **with** Jesus in this life. In order to be **with** Jesus now, we must be buried **with** Jesus in baptism. There is nothing difficult about understanding this point. However, before continuing your presentation of these charts, the one with whom you are studying must clearly understand this point.

b. One is buried in order to be resurrected to walk in newness of life. There is no newness of life if there is no burial. Through burial and resurrection one comes into a saving relationship **with** Jesus. Therefore, baptism is necessary in order to receive all spiritual blessings that are “in Christ.” Enjoying the benefit of all spiritual blessings is the walk of a new life.

In order for one to connect with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, he or she must be immersed in water for the remission of sins. This is what Paul is reminding the Christians in Rome. They were immersed and resurrected

with Christ. It is possible that they did not understand all the implications of their immersion at the time they were immersed. We must keep in mind that this passage is being written to those who had already been immersed. Paul could either be reminding them of what happened in the spiritual realm at the time of their immersion, or he could be laying the foundation for the arguments that he presents in the context of chapter 6. Whatever the case, he is not arguing that they needed to be rebaptized because they did not fully understand all the implications of their immersion when they were immersed in the past. They were immersed for the right reasons, but possibly did not fully understand the reasons.

3. Paul now comes to a restatement of what he said in verse 4. “*For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection.*”

a. Paul repeats in verse 5 the concepts and actions of verse 4 in order that this very important point not be missed.

b. One is united together with Jesus in the likeness of His death in order to be in the likeness of His resurrection. In verse 4 one was immersed **with** Christ. In this answer of verse 5, one is “united together” with Christ. The thought is the same as verse 4, but the way Paul expresses it is different.

c. The conclusion to one’s immersion, therefore, is that one obeys the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus by immersion in water. By the event of im-

mersion in one's life, he or she obeys the event of the gospel. One "obeys the gospel" by being immersed (buried) in water and resurrected out of water to walk in newness of life.

Paul has now answered the second question that was posed by his statement in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. The first question was "What is the gospel?" This question was answered by 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. The second question was, "How can one obey the gospel?" This question is answered by Romans 6:3-5. If you want to point out other passages that further enlighten one concerning what happens in the spiritual realm when one is baptized, then do so. However, the impact of what your prospect has discovered at this time in your study with him is so forceful, it is a time to let what has been stated to sink in. Your conclusion that he or she now sees is that one cannot escape the coming destruction of Jesus that Paul stated in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 unless he or she is baptized.

At this time the prospect may want to be immersed in order to obey the gospel. However, before one is immersed, the thought of verse 6 must be explained. There is a cost that must be paid. A decision to sacrifice must be made before one can go to the grave with Jesus. Becoming a disciple of Jesus means that one must both sacrifice and serve. Old sinful habits must be sacrificed and living for Jesus must become a part of one's daily walk. Paul explains this decision clearly in verse 6.

4. Romans 6:6: "... knowing this,

that our old man was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we should no longer be bondservants to sin."

a. Here again the concept of "with" Jesus is repeated. Before one is buried with Jesus, he or she must first be crucified **with** Jesus (See also Gl 2:20; Cl 2:20; 3:1-3). To be crucified with Christ means to give one's life in submission to His will. Such is repentance, a turning from our old way of life to a life in service to God (Read also Rm 6:7-23). Emphasizing this point lays the foundation for the concept of the next chart. Before one can go to the grave with Jesus, he or she must first count the cost of the cross. Jesus said, "*If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me*" (Lk 9:23).

b. The "body of sin" in verse 6 is our old way of life that must be discarded in order to walk an obedient life with Jesus. Instead of using our body to commit sin, the crucified believer must use it to the glory of God. In order to strengthen what you have just taught, you may use other parallel scriptures. The following key passages can be used to study important subjects that refer to one's conversion:

Repentance (Lk 13:3; At 2:38; 3:19; 17:30,31; 2 Pt 3:9).

Baptism (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:16; Jn 3:3-5; At 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pt 3:21)

Examples of baptism (At 2:41-47; 8:5-18; 8:30-39; 9:17,18; 10:34-48; 16:13; 16:25-34; 18:8; 19:1-5)

Chapter 9

Count The Cost!

One the following page, the last chart of this presentation of the gospel seeks to call on a commitment to discipleship. I have found that the term “Christian” has been misused so much in the religious world that people do not attach a concept of commitment to being a Christian. Some often refer to people being “Christian”, but see no commitment of work attached to being a Christian. On the other hand, the term “disciple” calls for action in the life of the one who would seek to follow Jesus. We are Christians. But we are Christians who are disciples of action. It is for this reason that this last chart is a call for committed discipleship on the part of the one who wants to obey the gospel.

A. Objectives:

1. *To teach that one must be willing to sacrifice all that is necessary in this life in order to obey the gospel and be a disciple of Jesus.*

2. *To teach that no human relationship of this life must come between us as a disciple and Jesus.*

B. Presentation instructions:

1. First read the text of Luke 14:25-35. From this text one must be sure to emphasize the following important points:

a. Emphasize verse 26 where Jesus said, “*If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.*” Ask the question on the chart, “**Are you willing to put Jesus before all personal relationships on earth?**” One’s answer must be “Yes.”

In this statement of Jesus it is often difficult for people to understand what is meant by the word “hate”. Matthew records a similar statement of Jesus that may have been made on a different occasion. “*He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me*” (Mt 10:37). The use of the word “hate” in Luke’s account means to love Jesus more than one loves his father or mother on earth. A disciple is willing to put Jesus first before human relationships, even the relationship with his or her father or mother. If one is not willing to do this, then Jesus said, “*He cannot be My disciple*” (Lk 14:26).

b. Emphasize verse 27. “*And whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple.*” Ask the question on the chart, “**Are you willing to bear the suffering of Jesus in your life?**” One’s answer must be “Yes” if he or she wants to obey the gospel.

c. In verses 28-32 Jesus calls on

Chart 9 COUNT THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP!

Luke 14:25-35

- Verse 26:** Are you willing to put Jesus before all personal relationships on earth? YES NO
- Verse 27:** Are you willing to bear the suffering of Jesus in your life as a disciple? YES NO
- Verse 33:** Are you willing to make all necessary sacrifices for Jesus? YES NO

1 Peter 4:17: What Will Be Your End?

us to “count the cost” of discipleship and consider the consequences of making Jesus one’s enemy.

Verses 28-30 emphasize the fact that one must first count the cost of discipleship before obeying the gospel. Emphasis is on taking the initiative to build. When one understands the simplicity of the gospel, he or she often is too quick to rush the waters of immersion in order to start building a tower. It is great to take the initiative. However, if one fails to complete the building, it is as Peter wrote, *“For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning”* (2 Pt 2:20).

Verses 31 & 32 emphasize the fact that one must sit down and consider whether he is able to stand against Jesus if he does not take the initiative to obey

the gospel. Imagine making Jesus your enemy. As the enemy of Jesus, one will suffer the fate of what Paul stated in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. There is only destruction for the one who would seek to make war against God. It is for this reason that one must sit down and take counsel. If one comes to the right conclusion that he cannot win the war against God, then it is time to seek conditions for peace. And it is God who determines the conditions for peace, not man.

d. In verse 33 Jesus emphasized the necessity for sacrifice. Ask the question on the chart, **“Are you willing to make all necessary sacrifices for Jesus?”** One’s answer must be “Yes.” It is not that we will have to make many sacrifices. However, if there is no sacrifice there is no spiritual growth. For example, when one becomes a disciple of Jesus his or her standard of living usually comes down. Before one is a dis-

ciple, all the money that one had was often consumed upon one's own lust. However, after becoming a disciple one uses what he or she has for the purpose of serving others. He or she no longer consumes everything upon one's own lust.

e. In verse 33 & 34 Jesus wanted us to know that if we are not willing to make all necessary sacrifices in order to be a disciple, then we are of no use for His purpose. The uncommitted life without sacrifice is as salt that has no saltiness. It has preservative power. It is thus cast out because it is worthless. The uncommitted disciple that is not willing to maintain commitment to Jesus is lukewarm, and thus spewed out by Jesus (Rv 3:15,16).

The concept of discipleship that Jesus emphasizes in the context of Luke 14:25-35 is very important to understand. When discussing this concept with those with whom you are presenting the gospel, here are some added points to teach:

(1) For many years after the establishment of the church in Acts 2, those who had obeyed the gospel were referred to as the disciples of Jesus. It was not until the church was established in Antioch that the disciples were referred to as Christians. Luke recorded, *"And it came to pass for a whole year that they assembled with the church and taught many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch"* (At 11:26). They were not called Christians by Christians. They were called Christians by those outside the church. The unbeliev-

ers referred to the disciples as Christians. They were called Christians about ten years after the establishment of the church in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

It is interesting to note that the word "Christian" is used only three times in the New Testament to refer to the people of God (At 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pt 4:16). However, the term "disciple" is used over two hundred times in reference to God's people. The point is that one must be a disciple in order to be a Christian. One is not a Christian in order to be a disciple.

The generic term "disciple" refers to one who is an apprentice. An apprentice is one who follows the instructions of his or her teacher. In order to be a successful apprentice, the student must be willing to leave his own life in order to cleave to his teacher. This point was illustrated in the early part of the ministry of Jesus when He called His first disciples. In Mark 1:16-18 Jesus called Simon (Peter) and Andrew to discipleship. Jesus said to them, *"Follow Me and I will make you become fishers of men."* *And immediately they left their nets and followed Him.* Becoming a disciple of Jesus means leaving something and following someone. It means seeking. Simon and Andrew immediately left their nets to follow Jesus in order to become fishers of men. They had a new destiny when they became disciples of Jesus. Though one does not have to leave his vocational means of support as Simon and Andrew who were called into apostleship, something usu-

ally has to be left in order to accomplish one's new purpose in life, that is, to be a fisher of men. Those who count the cost of discipleship, therefore, must seriously consider leaving something in order to accomplish the task of being a fisher of men.

In the context of Luke 9:23-26 Jesus emphasized the extent to which discipleship would cost those who decided to build with Him. *"If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me"* (Lk 9:23). Discipleship includes denial of self and sacrifice on a cross. In order to be crucified with Jesus (Rm 6:6), one will have to bear a cross. In the context of the first century disciples who committed themselves to Jesus, the cross meant death. In other words, they had to decide to go to death for Jesus if that was what discipleship meant. Such was expressed in the words of John in Revelation 2:10. *"Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life."* If one seeks to save his life through an uncommitted life, he or she will lose his or her eternal life in the destruction of eternal hell (Lk 9:24). Jesus wants us to know in Luke 9:25 that all the possessions of the world are not worth one's eternal salvation. Therefore, He concludes by saying, *"For whoever will be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His own glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels"* (Lk 9:26). A disciple cannot be ashamed of Jesus. He cannot be ashamed of the death of Jesus on a cross (Rm 1:16). Ashamed Christians do

not assume their responsibility of being fishers for men. If one is ashamed of sharing the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (the gospel), then he is not worthy of the confession of Jesus before God and the holy angels.

The cost of boldly standing as a fisher of men before the world was also illustrated by the desires of a certain lawyer in Luke 10:25-28. The lawyer asked Jesus, *"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"* (Lk 10:25). This question presented the occasion for introducing the parable of the good Samaritan. After the priest and Levite had passed by the one who had been beaten and robbed, the Samaritan took action. He defined and answered the question of the lawyer, *"Who is my neighbor?"* (Lk 10:29). For the disciple of Jesus, our neighbor is everyone who is in need, even complete strangers. Discipleship demands doing good to our neighbors (Gl 6:10).

From Jesus' teaching and example of discipleship, we can understand why His final words on earth urged His disciples to make disciples. *"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ..."* (Mt 28:19). As His disciples, we are to go and make disciples of others. Once an unbeliever makes a decision to become a disciple of Jesus after counting the cost, then this person is ready to obey the gospel by immersion.

(2) If any of the previous three questions of chart 9 are answered with "No", then read **1 Peter 4:17**. *"For the time has come that judgment begin at the*

house of God. And if it first begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God.”

1 Peter 4:17 is a question. Peter assumes that we, the Christian readers, will give the correct answer. And the correct answer to his question is that there is no hope for those who do not obey the gospel by immersion in water for the remission of sins. Peter is saying that if only

by the grace of God the judgment of death is waved from those who are in a covenant relationship with God (the house of God), then those who are outside this covenant are doomed to eternal destruction from the presence of God. It is imperative, therefore, that one come into the house of God through obedience of the gospel.

OUR EVANGELISTIC NATURE

Evangelism is not a program that Christians do. It is a way of life of the true disciple of Jesus. Disciples of Jesus cannot help but speak the things that they have heard and learned. When the Jewish council commanded Peter and John not to speak in the name of Jesus, listen to what Peter and John said in reply. *“Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you more than to God, you judge. **For we cannot but speak the things that we have seen and hear**”* (At 3:19,20). This is the way it is with every Christian. We cannot box the evangelistic nature of a Christian into a program. The sign of a true Christian is that he or she is using every God-given gift to reach others for Jesus. Christians realize that they have the gift of eternal life. And because they are confident of their salvation by the grace of God, they seek to give others a piece of the eternal pie. It would be unnatural and selfish for a Christian not to speak about his gift of eternal salvation. How can one not speak about that which is most precious in his life? It is for this reason that Christians must speak those things that they know. Reducing evangelism to a program would be seeking to silence the Christian when he is not involved in the program.